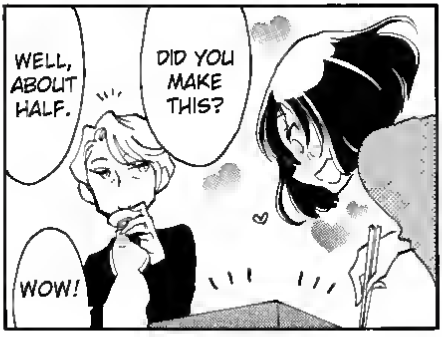
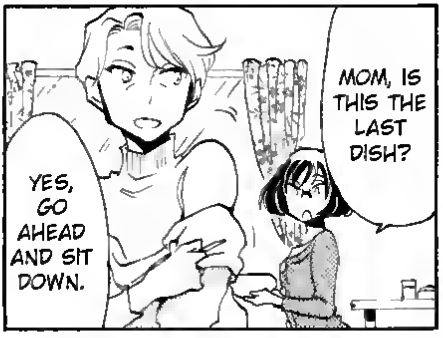
8TH GLASS
MICCHAN GREETS THE NEW YEAR
WOW, THERE IT IS!
THE FIRST SUNRISE OF THE YEAR!
THAT FIRST BEER, BATHING IN THE SUN'S RAYS...
SUBLIME!
YES, IT SURE IS!
...
HEY!
DON'T JUST LAZE AROUND, EVEN IF YOU ARE BACK ON VACATION! YOU HELP OUT TOO!
'KAAAY.
AND A BEAUTIFUL SHOT OF THE FIRST RAYS OVER MT. FUJI, TAKEN FROM LAKE SHOJI.
MICCHAN, VISITING HOME FOR NEW YEARS.

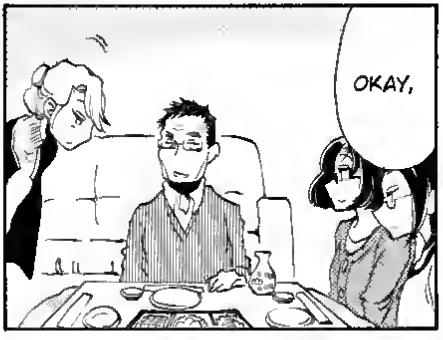
WOOAH! OSECHI!

SISTER MUTSUMI (25)
YOU REALIZE NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS START FROM THE FIRST?
YEAH, YEAH.

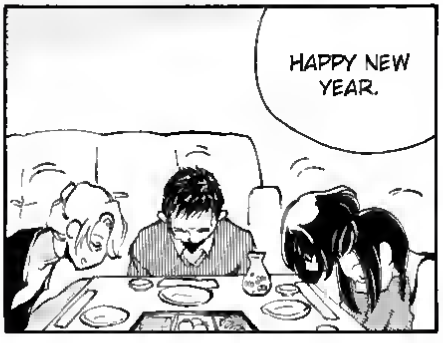

WELL, ABOUT HALF.
DID YOU MAKE THIS?
WOW!

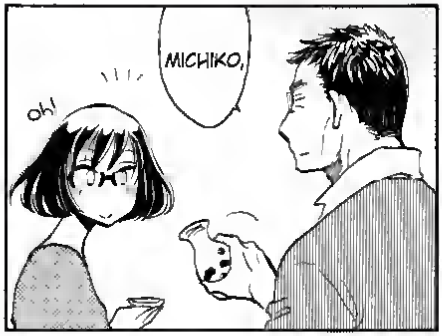

MOM, IS THIS THE LAST DISH?
YES, GO AHEAD AND SIT DOWN.

THE KURO-MAME, THE TAZUKURI, THE NAMASU,
OH, AND THE CHESTNUT KINTON CAME OUT REALLY WELL, IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF.


OKAY,

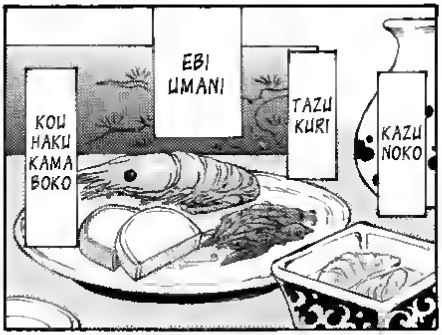
AH! HEY!
Gimme some!
THE ONE MUCCHAN IS ABOUT TO EAT THE LAST OF.

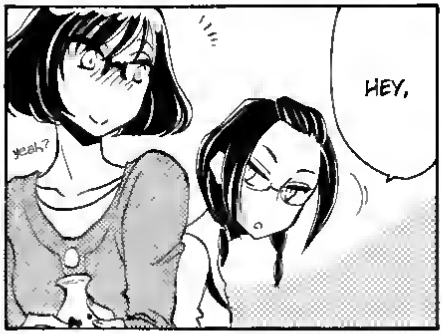

HAPPY NEW YEAR.


MICHIKO,
oh!

IN THE PAST I USED TO THINK OF OSECHI LIKE, "WHY IS IT SO BLAND", AND "THROW SOME MEAT IN THERE!", BUT...
YOU KNOW,
you what?

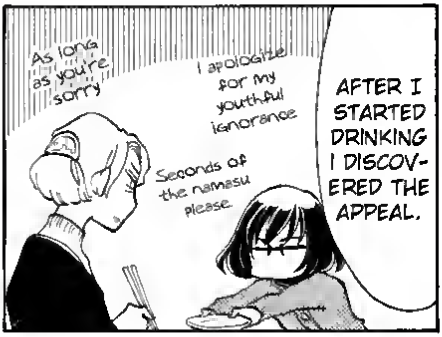
HOW LONG ARE YOU ON VACATION?
and some for you too
UNTIL THE FOURTH THIS YEAR.

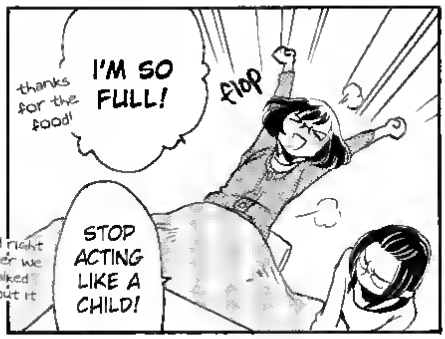

EBI UMANI
TAZU KURI
KAZU NOKO
KOU HAKU KAMA BOKO

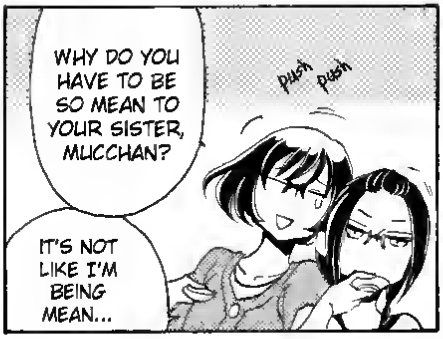

HEY,
yeah?

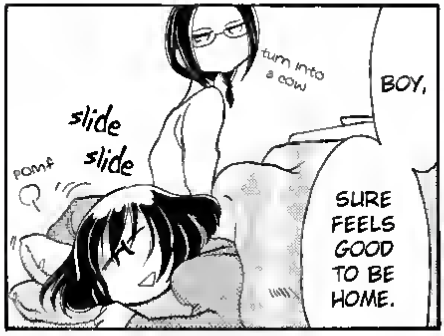
THEY ALL GO PERFECT WITH SAKE!
I could drink forever!

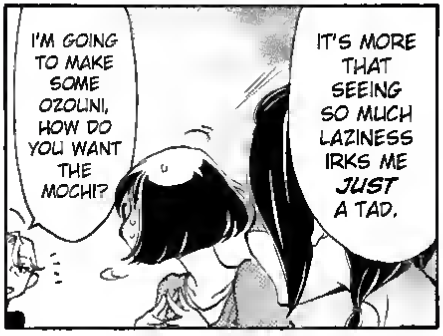
HOW LONG YOU HERE?
Hmmmmm?
I'M BEING ASKED ALMOST THE SAME THING, BUT WHAT'S WITH THIS CHANGE IN NUANCE...
I LEAVE MORNING ON THE THIRD...

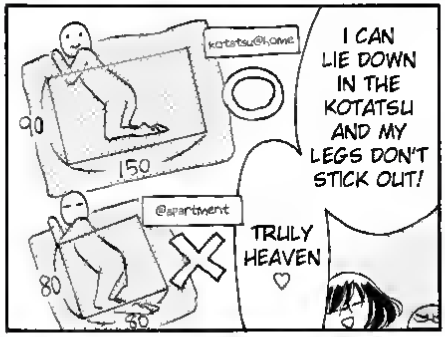

AFTER I STARTED DRINKING I DISCOVERED THE APPEAL.
I apologize for my youthful ignorance
As long as you're sorry
Seconds of the nameshi please

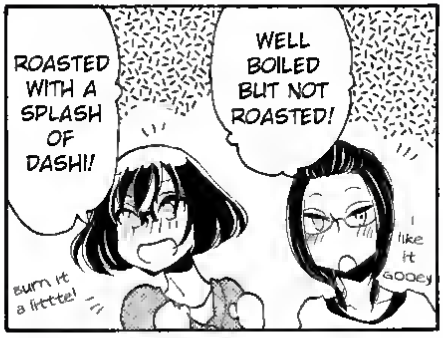

thanks for the food!
I'M SO FULL!
flop
and right after we talked about it
STOP ACTING LIKE A CHILD!


WHY DO YOU HAVE TO BE SO MEAN TO YOUR SISTER, MUCCHAN?
push push
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M BEING MEAN...

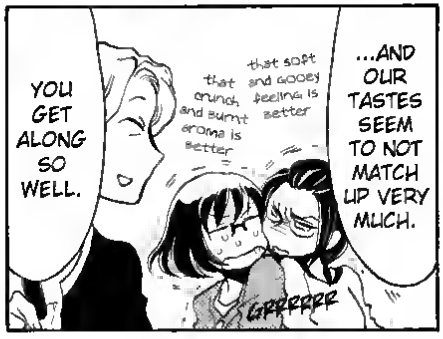

turn into a cow
slide slide
pomf
BOY,
SURE FEELS GOOD TO BE HOME.

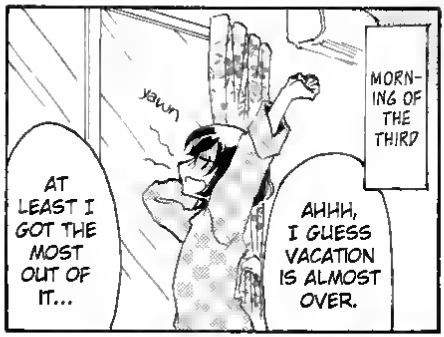

I'M GOING TO MAKE SOME OZOUNI, HOW DO YOU WANT THE MOCHI?
IT'S MORE THAT SEEING SO MUCH LAZINESS IRKS ME JUST A TAD.

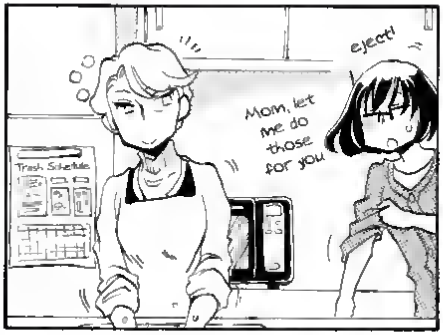

kotatsu@home
90
150
@apartment
80
30
I CAN LIE DOWN IN THE KOTATSU AND MY LEGS DON'T STICK OUT!
TRULY HEAVEN


ROASTED WITH A SPLASH OF DASHI!
WELL BOILED BUT NOT ROASTED!
burn it a little!
I like it gooey

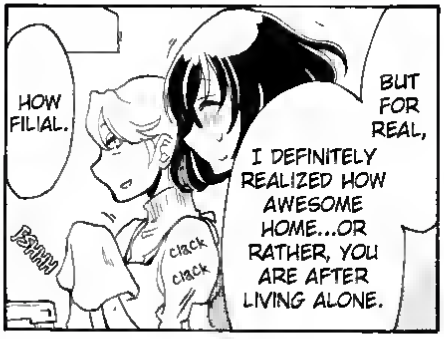
BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, AT THE APARTMENT I DON'T HAVE PEOPLE POKING ME IN THE SIDE...
JAB
OW!
JAB
OW!
JAB
OW!
which is better...

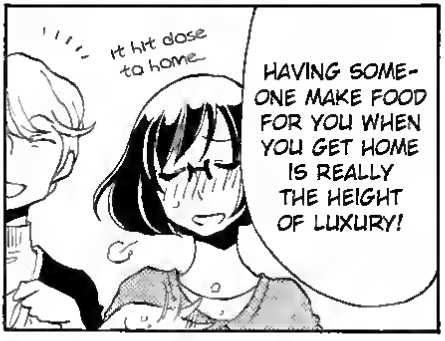

YOU GET ALONG SO WELL.
that crunch and burnt aroma is better
that soft and gooey feeling is better
...AND OUR TASTES SEEM TO NOT MATCH UP VERY MUCH.
GRRRRR


yawn
MORNING OF THE THIRD
AHHH, I GUESS VACATION IS ALMOST OVER.
AT LEAST I GOT THE MOST OUT OF IT...


eject!
Mom, let me do those for you
Trash Schedule

three bottles empty
Thank you
Dad's secret sake stash...
Has Mika gone yet?
Nope
Thank you
what?
So Sikil is getting hitched
ooh, shrine sake!
no way?
Yama-chan too.
Local Shiale friends meetup
Michiko will be roasted, er
First reversal of the year

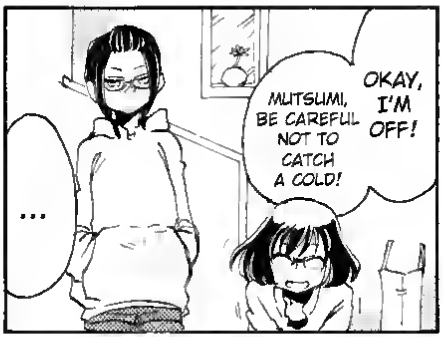

HOW FILIAL.
BUT FOR REAL, I DEFINITELY REALIZED HOW AWESOME HOME...OR RATHER, YOU ARE AFTER LIVING ALONE.
BSHHH
clack clack


It hit close to home.
HAVING SOMEONE MAKE FOOD FOR YOU WHEN YOU GET HOME IS REALLY THE HEIGHT OF LUXURY!

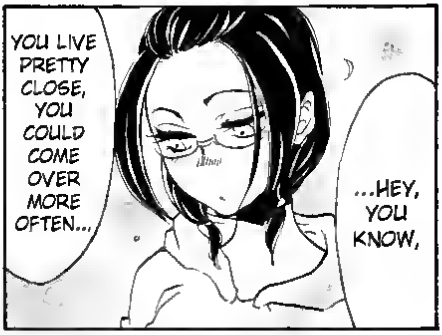
WAIT! ALL I DID WAS DRINK THE WHOLE TIME!!
MICHIKO, ARE YOU DONE PACKING YET?

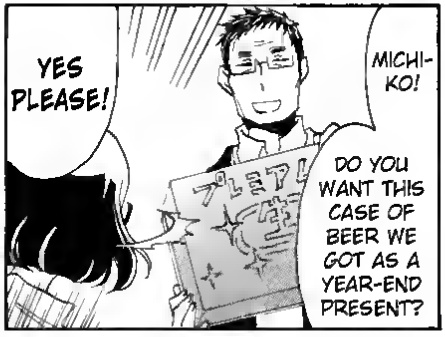
AND SO, WHILE IT'S SMALL, PLEASE LET ME MAKE YOU SOME COFFEE♡
SIT, SIT!
NO OBJECTIONS FROM ME♪

MICHIKO, ARE YOU SURE YOU WON'T TAKE ANOTHER HEAD OF CHINESE CABBAGE?
MOOM!

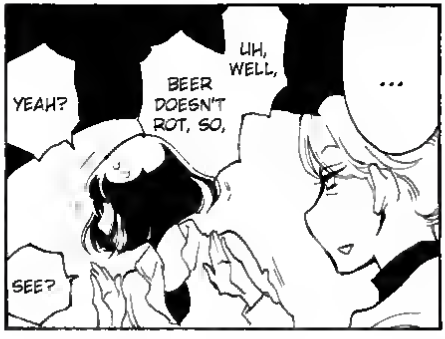

...
MUTSUMI, BE CAREFUL NOT TO CATCH A COLD!
OKAY, I'M OFF!

OOF
CHECK
I'M FINE, THERE'S NO WAY I CAN FINISH ALL THIS ALONE ANYWAY!
AND I HAVE PLENTY OF LUGGAGE ALREADY...


YOU LIVE PRETTY CLOSE, YOU COULD COME OVER MORE OFTEN...
...HEY, YOU KNOW,


YES PLEASE!
MICHI-KO!
DO YOU WANT THIS CASE OF BEER WE GOT AS A YEAR-END PRESENT?

WOO HOO!
OH!?
IS IT DERE-MUCCHAN TIME!?
WHAT'S THIS!?
IS THIS THAT "DERE"?


YEAH?
UH, WELL,
BEER DOESN'T ROT, SO,
...
SEE?

NOT SWEET, NOT SWEET AT ALL
It's been five years since you moved out, jeez
UHH... I WAS HOPING YOU WOULD FINALLY PUT AWAY ALL THE JUNK YOU HAVE LEFT OVER HERE...
come on already

she snuck that cabbage in!
Hey!
ah!
mother-daughter tug of war
that little...
ah! one of the umeshu bottles is gone!

What?
?
Genes..
Genes..

CREDITS:

UKATSU, AUTHOR AND ARTIST

IN JAPAN, NEW YEARS IS THE BIG HOLIDAY FOR VISITING FAMILY (THOUGH OBON IS ANOTHER BIG ONE). PEOPLE USUALLY GET FROM AROUND THE 31ST OF DECEMBER TO THE 3RD OF JANUARY OFF WORK, GIVE OR TAKE.

"OSECHI" REFERS TO A TRADITIONAL SET OF FOODS EATEN ON NEW YEARS, MOSTLY MADE WITH VEGETABLES AND SEAFOOD. IN THE PAST, IT WAS SORT OF TABOO TO COOK DURING THE FIRST THREE DAYS OF THE NEW YEAR, SO PEOPLE PREPARED VARIOUS SMALL DISHES AT THE END OF THE YEAR AND STORED THEM FOR EATING AT THE START OF THE NEW YEAR. NOWADAYS THEY ARE JUST A NEW YEARS HOLIDAY FOOD, LIKE MAYBE FRUIT CAKES AROUND CHRISTMAS OR CANDY CORN FOR HALLOWEEN IN THE US. SOME PEOPLE MAKE THEIR OWN, BUT YOU CAN BUY THEM PRETTY MUCH ANYWHERE AROUND THE YEAR END. IT'S ALMOST ALWAYS SERVED/STORED IN FANCY BOXES LIKE THIS.

KUROMAME (BLACK BEANS) ARE BLACK SOYBEANS IN A SWEET SAUCE.

TAZUKURI IS DRIED, GLAZED SARDINES.

NAMASU IS THINLY SLICED VEGETABLES THAT HAVE BEEN SLIGHLY PICKLED.

CHESTNUT (KURI) KINTON IS A DISH OF SWEET CHESTNUTS AND MASHED SWEET POTATOES.

KAZUNOKO IS A PREPARED LUMP OF HERRING ROE.

EBI UMANI IS SHRIMP/PRAWN COOKED IN A SWEET SAUCE AND SAKE.

KOUHAKU KAMABOKO (RED/WHITE FISH LOAF) IS PUREED AND STEAMED FISH MEAT.

OZOUNI IS A SOUP WITH MOCHI AND POTENTIALLY LOTS OF OTHER STUFF IN IT. IT VARIES DRASTICALLY FROM REGION TO REGION, AND EVEN BETWEEN FAMILIES (OR WITHIN FAMILIES, AS SEEN HERE).

DASHI IS LIKE A SOUP STOCK, AND IS USED IN FUCKING EVERYTHING IN JAPAN.

OSECHI

KUROMAME

TAZUKURI

NAMASU

KURI KINTON

KAZUNOKO

EBI UMANI

KOUHAKU KAMABOKO

OZOUNI

KOTATSU YOU SHOULD ALREADY KNOW, BUT ARE THOSE TABLES WITH A BLANKET AND HEATER BUILT IN. ONLY REALLY USED IN WINTER.

MIWA AKIHIRO IS A FAMOUS SINGER/SONGWRITER(/AUTHOR/ ACTOR/DIRECTOR/ETC.) BORN IN 1935. STILL ALIVE TODAY. OPENLY GAY AND A CROSSDRESSER.
COULDN'T FIND ANY GOOD YOUTUBES OF THEIR MUSIC THOUGH.

THE SHOW MICHIKO&MOM ARE WATCHING ON TV IS KOUHAKU, AN ANNUAL EVENT ON NEW YEAR'S EVE WHERE POPULAR SINGERS/BANDS/ETC. ARE SPLIT INTO TWO TEAMS (RED AND WHITE) TO COMPETE (WITH MUSIC; IT'S NOT SOME WEIRD REALITY SHOW). EXTREMELY POPULAR THING TO WATCH, AND VERY PRESTIGIOUS TO BE INVITED TO AS A MUSICIAN.

KOUHAKU MEANS "RED AND WHITE", WHICH ARE TWO COLORS ASSOCIATED WITH LUCK AND HEALTH AND GOOD STUFF GENERALLY, ESPECIALLY IN SHINTO, BUT AS A GENERAL CULTURAL THING TOO.

THE SHRINE SAKE IS "SAKE OF THE GODS", PREPARED FOR DRINKING DURING FESTIVALS AND AS OFFERINGS TO THE GODS.

IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TSUNDERE IS, GET OUT.

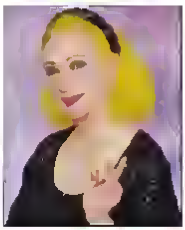
UMESHU IS AN ALCOHOLIC DRINK MADE FROM PLUMS. TASTY, AND RELATIVELY EASY TO MAKE AT HOME.

THE "TURN INTO A COW" LINE COMES FROM A SUPERSTITION (MORE LIKE ONE OF THOSE STORIES YOU TELL CHILDREN SO THAT THEY SHUT UP AND DO WHAT YOU TELL THEM) THAT IF YOU SLEEP AFTER EATING YOU WILL TURN INTO A COW.

IT IS CUSTOMARY FOR PEOPLE/FAMILIES (AND BUSINESSES) TO GIVE EACH OTHER GIFTS TO CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR (ALSO AT THE HALF-YEAR MARK IN JUNE).
GO TO ANY SUPERMARKET AND THEY WILL HAVE A WHOLE CORNER WHERE YOU CAN PICK OUT A BOX OF SOME "PREMIUM" VERSION OF A PRODUCT AND TELL THEM WHO TO SEND IT TO. BEER, SAKE, JUICE, MEAT, SWEETS, ETC. ARE COMMON CHOICES.

KOTATSU

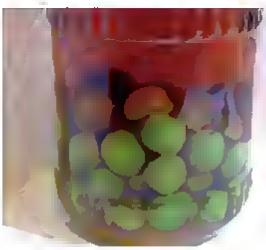
MIWA



KOUHAKU

MIKO SERVING SHRINE SAKE

HOMEMADE UMESHU



TSUNDERE